



MYP: the next chapter

Project report (October 2011)

Introduction

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is reviewing the design of the Middle Years Programme (MYP). The aim is to provide a structure that more clearly enables students to be successful in further IB studies at the same time as facilitating schools in combining the MYP with the requirements of national/state systems. The new design will create an innovative, concept-based and appropriately assessed programme for 11-16 year olds that fully reflects the IB principles of teaching and learning.

Project initiation

This project was initiated in September 2010. The first development meeting held in The Hague 22–24 November 2010 brought together key IB staff members and six teachers, two from each of the IB regions. During the course of the meeting a series of recommendations were developed, supported by current research.

Before the second development meeting held in The Hague, 25–27 May 2011, work began on addressing some of the initial recommendations. These included:

- Working closely with Lynn Erickson (consultant) in developing the curriculum framework
- Timeline planning to develop guides by 2014
- Decision to stall the publishing of further guides or TSMs after 2012, until the launch of MYP: the next chapter suite of documents
- Exploration of a 'common core' to IB programmes
- Adoption of Approaches To Learning (ATL) [*Command terms in the Middle Years Programme*, December 2010] by the Primary Years Programme and Diploma Programme
- The evaluation of areas of interaction within the curriculum with a view to possibly replacing them with global contexts to more explicitly build the international dimension into the curriculum.
- Surveying schools in May 2011 – to establish the need for change and to gauge reaction to proposed changes
- Creation of an online, pre-populated mapping tool to identify interdisciplinary connections and reduce teacher paperwork
- Informal feedback from stakeholders in schools and at conferences
- Subject choice in MYP 4–5: Pilot initiated in Turkey and UK from August 2011.

School surveys

Below is a summary of findings from the two surveys sent to coordinators in May 2011. Survey 1 was sent to all MYP schools – authorized and candidate. Survey 2 was sent to IB World schools with PYP and DP, but not MYP.

Survey 1: Key observations

- The overall opinion on the proposed changes to MYP is extremely positive; 94% of respondents considered that, taken together, they would view the changes as being positive in their school. Only 6% did not view the changes as positive.
- The area with the highest levels of agreement in terms of a positive impact being made occurred in relation to the statements about support for programme implementation.
- Statements surrounding assessment and recognition were the most contentious. Further exploration is needed in this area; 76% of respondents thought an optional summative e-assessment in the final year would be positive.

Survey 2: Key observations

- The overall opinion on the proposed changes to MYP is extremely positive; 91% of respondents considered that, taken together, they would view the changes as being positive and would consider implementing the MYP in their school.

Moving forwards

The section below outlines the decisions made at the second meeting and directions to be taken.

Curriculum development

Contextual learning:

- Areas of interaction (AOI) will become 'global contexts'
- Clear explanations of exactly what is meant by a global context in our documentation
- A key aim of global contexts is to facilitate principled action in terms of awareness and understanding, action and/or reflection.

Curriculum planning

- Every unit must be planned according to the MYP planning process. The planning process will be adapted to align with the changes.
- Global awareness, learner profile attributes and action will be developed through unit planning and will not be assessed.

Alignment across PYP, MYP and DP

- In defining an IB learning experience across the three programmes, alignment will be achieved through units in each programme focussed through sustained inquiry, principled action and reflection.

Conceptual framework:

- Key concepts:
 - transcend the disciplines
 - disciplines do not have to use all of the key concepts
 - subject guides will provide direction on the most appropriate key concepts.
- Related concepts:
 - discipline-based
 - related to the key concepts
 - subject guides to include possible unit topics for each related concept.
- Central idea: overarching, transferable idea built with the 'key concept(s)', or a 'key' and a 'related concept.'
- Disciplinary understandings: important understandings written with the 'related concepts'; bring depth to the unit; provide ideas for assessment.

Assessment development

MYP internal assessment

- All subjects will have four criteria.
- Command terms will be used to define levels in all subjects.
- Mandated interim criteria and objectives.
- Common criteria will be aligned across subjects where applicable.
- Attitudes may be a part of ATL and will not be assessed in any subject.

Assessment support – developing monitoring of assessment

- Monitoring of assessment will continue.
- Online training for moderators could be made available as professional development for all MYP teachers.
- Develop a mentoring service provided for teachers/schools.

Potential assessment model

- Internal assessment—amended Personal Project with compulsory moderation – noted on certificate for certifying students
- External assessment—the optional concept-based summative e-assessment will be electronic and criterion-related. The exam will be disciplinary and lead to a transcript to include lists of graded subjects together with an overarching graded interdisciplinary (ID) task and an overall MYP grade. The exams will be based on key concepts, and developed around global issues. Examiners will write disciplinary questions from an inquiry-based approach around key

concepts, culminating in an ID assessment, to bring it all together. It is a concept based curriculum with global contexts so the exam can be approached through any content.

- This type of exam should result in a positive backwash on curriculum, with teachers writing units focused on interdisciplinary teaching and deep concepts while discouraging rote teaching and learning based on coverage of content.
- Another benefit of having ID and disciplinary-based exams is that the knowledge of concepts is enhanced by disciplines—disciplinary understanding is needed to get to ID understanding.
- Understandable to teachers, parents and students—credible and robust
- Formative assessment—will continue as a crucial part of MYP. Teachers will continue to develop tasks and internal assessment that do not contribute to a final grade
- No subject moderation
- Quality assurance will be achieved via subject frameworks and programme evaluation.

Recognition

Recognition will be a useful consequence of the proposed changes, but not the driving force. If MYP can gain governmental (state and national) recognition and accreditation, then more students will have the opportunity to benefit from an MYP education. More schools will be able to implement the MYP and opportunities for school funding will increase.

Programme model

- The MYP will remain an octagon and will not move towards a hexagon.
- Eight subject groups will be maintained
- Names of the subject groups may change based on need, or to align with the PYP and/or DP
- Although many schools will choose to maintain the breadth of 8 subjects for all students, students may have a choice of subject groups in years 4 and 5 of the programme:
- Minimum of 6 subject groups
- Language B (or second Language A) mandatory for all students in all years
- For schools that finish the MYP at year 3 or year 4, there will be a culminating task. This will be developmentally appropriate, positioned between the PYP exhibition and the MYP personal project. It will not be assessed or moderated.

Summary

Although a number of details are still to be decided, we now have a clear direction for the development of the curriculum framework and an assessment blueprint. Supported by a pre-populated online curriculum mapping tool, this curriculum and assessment will enable more students to access an IB education. It will be further recognized by governments and universities and will carry prestige as being a leader in international education. The ground-breaking conceptual framework and innovative interdisciplinary e-assessment will attract even more schools to the programme. We anticipate accelerated growth in the number of MYP schools and an increasing impact of MYP students within their local community and world-wide. The core documentation for the programme is scheduled for piloting from January and June 2012. The professional development, publishing, school services, IT and communication departments in the IB will support the launch in 2014, with first assessment in 2015.

Summary changes	Contribution to the aims of the project
Increased emphasis on approaches to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will increase students' preparedness for Theory of Knowledge (TOK) Will allow for the introduction of higher abstraction in MYP4–5 with regard to the nature of knowledge
Increased emphasis on principled action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will increase students' preparedness for CAS Emphasis on principled action will lead to greater depth of reflection and engagement
Global contexts as an important underpinning for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens the strand of international-mindedness linking the three IB programmes and relates to new thinking on world studies extended essay in the DP.
All teaching and learning will be contextual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some development of ways of knowing in TOK and idea of principled action in preparation for CAS.
Prescribed key and related concepts will shape the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will ensure the necessary conceptual understanding for DP is achieved and potential alignment with PYP Will allow for combination with external requirements Will ensure that age-appropriate concepts are included, thus ensuring the rigour of the programme
Pre-populated online curriculum development tool created	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate MYP curriculum development in all schools. Less paperwork and easier for teachers to chart learning.
Students in years four and five may choose to study a minimum of six from eight subject groups with Language B (or second Language A) compulsory for all students in every year of the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows students to start focusing on choices and transition more easily to six subjects in DP. Facilitate the combination with local/state/national systems in which students are required to choose between different streams in upper secondary Requirement for language B in all years of the programme maintains the philosophy of the IB and provides a common strand throughout the three IB programmes
A culminating task will be completed by all year three/four students in schools where MYP ends at that age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for MYP 1–3 and MYP 1–4 schools to provide students with an official culminating task Can be used to emphasize a change in learning from MYP 1–3 to MYP 4–5

A personal project will be completed by all year five students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further prepares students for the demands of TOK by using different disciplinary perspectives • Ensures students are asked to apply disciplinary understanding in an unfamiliar interdisciplinary situation
The majority of assessment will continue to be internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for schools to meet other external requirements
Moderation of the personal project will be mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further prepares students for the extended essay assessment • Moderation of the culminating task for all schools will increase global standardization
An electronic, externally validated, summative assessment will be offered (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further prepares students for summative assessment in the DP • Will help to achieve recognition of the MYP in different settings • Can be used to ensure students utilize their disciplinary understanding in an unfamiliar situation • This type of exam should result in a positive backwash on curriculum, with teachers writing units focused on interdisciplinary teaching and deep concepts while discouraging rote teaching and learning.